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## **ID Theft Summit Report a Call to Action Against Top Consumer Crime**

*Recommendation From 2005 Event Presented to Office of the Governor as State Moves Forward*

SACRAMENTO – Fred Aguiar, Secretary of the California State and Consumer Services Agency, today formally presented to the Office of the Governor the report from the administration's first identity theft summit, listing recommendations for combating the nation's top crime against consumers.

"Stepping up consumer education in identity theft prevention and providing training for law enforcement are key recommendations in the identity theft summit report, and we've boosted the budget for the California Office of Privacy Protection to help make this happen," said Aguiar.

Identity theft is understood to be the fastest-growing crime in the United States, with more than nine million victims annually, more than a million of those in California. California leads the nation in providing legal rights, remedies and other resources for preventing and responding to identity theft, and the state is already moving forward with steps outlined in the report. Yet, much more needs to be done to combat this crime, said Aguiar.

The report is a comprehensive policy discussion on identity theft and contains recommendations ranging from legislative proposals to outreach strategies that will help educate Californians through efforts by law enforcement, institutions of higher learning and businesses. The report also recommends providing special assistance to identity theft victims and conducting broad-based research into criminal identity theft activity.

Charlene Zettel, Director of the California Department of Consumer Affairs, announced that further recommendations in the report will be carried out at the next statewide identity theft summit, *Teaming Up Against Identity Theft: A Summit on Solutions*, scheduled for Feb. 23, 2006, in Los Angeles.

"Consumers, business, law enforcement and prosecutors compared notes at the first identity theft summit, identified obstacles to prosecuting this crime, and proposed solutions," explained Zettel. "Next year's summit will be focused on providing nuts-and-bolts training for these key stakeholders."

The California District Attorneys Association (CDAA) hosted this year's summit and will do so again for the 2006 event.

"Governor Schwarzenegger has shown he is committed to the fight against identity theft," said Jan Scully, CDAA President. "His leadership has brought together prosecutors, business, consumer groups and government agencies to fight the epidemic of identity theft crimes in California by working cooperatively to investigate and prosecute identity thieves."

Governor Schwarzenegger has signed numerous identity theft bills into law, adding to the arsenal of privacy protection measures in California.

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